REMARKS

In view of the following discussion, the Applicants submit that none of the claims now pending in the application is anticipated under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 102. Thus, the Applicants believe that all of these claims are now in allowable form.

I. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 22-47 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

1. Claims 22-47

The Examiner has rejected claims 22-47 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the Mahany patent (United States Patent No. 5,960,344, issued on September 28, 1999, hereinafter "Mahany"). The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

In particular, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the fact that Mahany fails to teach, show or suggest the novel invention of communicating using a first, point-to-point medium to configure the use of a second, shared medium, as claimed in Applicants' independent claims 22 and 35.

By contrast, Mahany at most teaches using a dedicated communication channel to broadcast a busy signal when a wireless access point is engaged in communication over a primary communication channel with a wireless terminal, so that other wireless terminals will receive the busy signal and will not attempt to send colliding transmissions to the access point. This is not the same as using a first communication medium to configure or set up a communication over a second communication medium.

The Applicants note the specific passages of Mahany that are cited by the Examiner as allegedly teaching the claimed limitations, but respectfully submit that these passages do not, in fact, "clearly [teach] exchanging a first communication between a first networked device and a second networked device over a point-to-point medium and configuring, via [the] first communication, [the] use of a shared medium by at least [a] second networked device" (emphasis added), as the Examiner suggests. First, the Applicants submit that there is no explicit, or even implicit, mention anywhere in these passages, or anywhere else in Mahany, of the use of a point-to-point

communications medium.

The first cited passage of Mahany (*i.e.*, column 1, lines 51-67) describes a prior art approach (and its undesirable properties) to a problem with which Mahany is concerned. Specifically, this passage of Mahany describes a "hidden terminal" problem – a collision between the communications of two terminals attempting to access a third device (*e.g.*, an access point), wherein the two terminals cannot detect each other's communications. This problem can only occur in a shared communications medium. In a point-to-point communications medium, communications are directed, one-to-one, and therefore no such "collisions" are possible. The described prior art solution, of using a "busy channel" (*see, e.g.*, column 1, line 60), also involves the use of a shared communications medium. The "busy" carrier signal is broadcast to all devices, as described at column 1, lines 62-65 ("All terminals were also fitted with a second receiver, tuned to the busy channel, and required to check the busy channel before initiating communication on the data channel"). Thus, the described prior art approach also does not teach a point-to-point, directed communications medium.

The second cited passage of Mahany (*i.e.*, column 2, line 62 – column 3, line 12) describes a multi-channel wireless communication system (which may also have a wired connection) wherein devices may choose to participate on a particular channel, perhaps based on current channel conditions. Again, there is no mention of a point-to-point communications medium. The third and final cited passage of Mahany (*i.e.*, column 5, lines 44-52) describes the reception of signals from roaming devices at two wireless adapters of an access point. Again, there is no teaching or suggestion of a point-to-point communications medium.

The totality of the Mahany reference describes problems encountered in shared medium wireless communications systems and specific solutions thereto involving the use of multiple wireless adapters/antennae operable on a shared communications medium (perhaps utilizing different frequencies of that shared medium). The reference is completely devoid of any teaching or suggestion of a second type of communications medium, and specifically makes no reference to a point-to-point communications medium as recited in Applicants' claims.

Further, Mahany does not teach or suggest using a communication over a first type of communications medium (*e.g.*, a point-to-point medium) to configure a communication over a second type of communications medium (*e.g.*, a shared medium). The Examiner first cites Mahany at column 8, lines 35-52 to teach this limitation. This passage describes an access point that is operable for communication on two wireless channels and a wired local area network (LAN) "backbone". The Examiner then cites Mahany at column 9, lines 22-30, which describes operation of a routing algorithm that ensures correct forwarding of communications to their destinations, accounting for the fact that portable units may have moved out of range. Even assuming, *in arguendo*, that updating a routing table could be considered to constitute "configuring [...] a use of a shared medium", as described in Applicants' claims, Mahany describes this updating as being performed by "[t]he access point 600 periodically poll[ing] devices within its communication cell to update the network configuration". Such updating is therefore performed in response to a communication over a shared medium (the wireless channels), and not with respect to any communication over any point-to-point medium as set forth in Applicants' claims.

Applicants' independent claims 22 and 35 positively recite:

> 22. A method for managing communications over a plurality of networked devices, the method comprising:
> exchanging a first communication between a first networked device and a second networked device over a point-to-point medium; and
> configuring, via said first communication, a use of a shared medium by at least said second networked device. (Emphasis added)
>
> 35. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of instructions, the plurality of instructions including instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the steps of a method for managing communications over a plurality of networked devices, the method comprising:
> exchanging a first communication between a first networked device and a second networked device over a point-to-point medium; and
> configuring, via said first communication, a use of a shared medium by at least said second networked device. (Emphasis added)

The Applicants' invention is directed to a method of combining specialized, spatially distinguished point-to-point communications with other wireless networking communications to provide networking configuration in classroom-like settings. In current teaching practice, there is an emphasis placed on the teacher's ability to interact directly with students, assign problems or tasks that are unique to specific students or groups of students and to move about the classroom while students are engaged in their work. There is also a decreased emphasis on teachers lecturing from a single location in the classroom. It is expected that in this manner, teachers may obtain a better sense of the progress that the students are making in their learning. However, this also makes the management of assigned tasks, access permissions, document flow, student responses and other work flow concerns more complicated. It is infeasible for a teacher to become a system administrator (*e.g.*, assigning access permissions, group names and the like) in addition to his or her other responsibilities.

The Applicants' invention enables a teacher to manage the use of electronic communication devices by students using a combination of specialized, spatially distinguished point-to-point communications and other wireless networking communications. For example, a teacher may wish to assign a capability to a student, such as the capability to use a particular network resource (*e.g.*, a printer). To do so, the teacher may initiate a first communication between his or her device and the student's device using a first communication medium (*e.g.*, a point-to-point medium), in order to convey the desired capability. The teacher may then initiate a second communication between his or her device and the network resource in a similar manner. These two communications over the first communication medium enable a third communication (possibly subject to certain limitations conveyed in the first and second communications), between the student's device and the network resource, over a second communication medium (*e.g.*, a shared medium). The communication over the second communication medium is thus "configured" via the communications over the first communication medium. In this manner, the teacher can easily manage the student's use of the network and associated resources.

As discussed above, Mahany fails to teach, show or suggest a method of

communicating using a first communication medium to configure the use of a second communication medium, as claimed in Applicants' independent claims 22 and 35. In particular, Mahany does not teach configuring the use of a shared medium via communications over a point-to-point medium. Therefore, the Applicants submit that independent claims 22 and 35 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §102 and are patentable thereunder.

Dependent claims 23-34 and 36-47 depend, respectively, from claims 22 and 35 and recite additional features therefore. As such, and for at least the same reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that claims 23-34 and 36-47 are not anticipated by the teachings of Mahany. Therefore, the Applicants submit that dependent claims 23-34 and 36-47 also fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §102 and are patentable thereunder.

2. Claims 22 and 35

The Examiner has rejected claims 22 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the Enns patent (United States Patent No. 6,658,010, issued on December 2, 2003, hereinafter "Enns"). The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

In particular, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the fact that Enns, like Mahany, fails to teach, show or suggest the novel invention of exchanging a first communication using a point-to-point medium to configure the use of a second, shared medium, as claimed in Applicants' independent claims 22 and 35, recited above.

Enns teaches a network management system for asymmetric networks (*see, e.g.*, Enns at Abstract), meaning that communication packets downstream (to end-user devices) and upstream (from end-user devices) take different paths, speeds and/or protocols to and from a point of presence (POP) (*see, e.g.*, Enns at column 3, lines 50-55 and Fig. 1). Enns explicitly teaches that the downstream communications path is a shared-medium (*see, e.g.*, Enns at column 2, lines 40-43). However, Applicants' claims 22 and 35 both positively recite "exchanging a first communication ... over a point-to-point medium" (emphasis added). For a communication to be exchanged over a

particular medium, both the forward and reverse paths of the communication must comprise a point-to-point medium. As the network of Enns is asymmetric, and the downstream communications path is a shared medium, Enns cannot teach exchanging a first communication ... over a point-to-point medium. Accordingly, Enns fails to teach, show or suggest configuring the use of a shared medium via communications over a point-to-point medium.

Thus, the Applicants submit that independent claims 22 and 35 are not anticipated by the teachings of Enns. Therefore, the Applicants submit that claims 22 and 35 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §102 and are patentable thereunder.

II. CONCLUSION

Thus, the Applicants submit that all of the presented claims now fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §102. Consequently, the Applicants believe that all of the presented claims are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring the issuance of a final action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Mr. Kin-Wah Tong, Esq. at (732) 530-9404 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

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